

Director's Report

City Council Threshold Resolution on 2006 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments

March 28, 2006



City of Seattle

Department of Planning and Development

2006 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments Executive's Report and Recommendations

March 27, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the Executive's recommendations about which amendments to Seattle's Comprehensive Plan to consider further in 2006. It includes an evaluation and recommendation for each proposed amendment. The Growth Management Act limits amending the Comprehensive Plan to once each year except for certain specified actions. City Council Resolution 30412 establishes a two-step process for considering annual amendments.

The first step is to determine which proposed amendments to consider further in 2006. After public notice, a hearing, and deliberation by the Council's Urban Planning and Development Committee, the City Council will vote on a Resolution identifying the potential amendments to the Comprehensive Plan this year.

Of the 2006 proposals received, the Mayor is recommending that the following be studied in more detail before making a final determination about whether these amendments should be adopted and what form such adoption should take:

Add triangle bounded by Aurora Avenue, Denny Way and Broad Street to the Uptown Urban Center

- New area is not currently within a neighborhood planning area.

South Lake Union

- Proposal would replace SLU's current neighborhood planning goals and policies to reflect the area's recent urban center designation and related City planning efforts.

North Highline as a Potential Annexation Area

- Identifies North Highline area as a logical extension of Seattle's city boundaries, in keeping with GMA directives and Countywide Planning Policies for urban areas to be included in incorporated cities. The area contains the White Center and Boulevard Park neighborhoods, with 32,000 residents.

Designate one parcel near the proposed Henderson Street Link Light Rail station as multifamily on the Future Land Use Map.

- Parcel is south of the proposed Henderson Street light rail station adjacent to C2-65 zoning along Martin Luther King Jr., Way.

Amendments to facilitate the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement and Waterfront Concept Plan

- Plans could include reroute of Hwy 99 to lessen the severity of the curve near Colman Dock, as well as construction activities, temporary uses, and staging in the waterfront area, and some of these activities would not be permitted by current policy.

Amend Future Land Use Map to redesignate Goodwill site from “Industrial” to “Commercial Mixed Use.”

- This change is part of the South Downtown planning effort being carried out by the Department of Planning and Development.

Amend Future Land Use Map to designate two parcels south and west of the Magnolia Bridge “Commercial Mixed Use” for one and “Open space” for the other.

- This will enable expansion of Smith Cove park and potential mixed use development.

Exempt a portion of the Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center from size-of-use limits on commercial space.

- Proposal would affect the area bounded by Colorado Avenue S., S. Walker Street, Occidental Avenue S., and S. Forest Street.

Amend the goals and policies of the Roosevelt Neighborhood.

- Proposal will enable changes arising from community planning efforts in response to the recent identification of a new site for the proposed light rail station.

The following amendment should not be considered further as a Comprehensive Plan amendment:

Contract rezones for contaminated properties of ten or more acres in the Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center

- Allow contract rezones to non-industrial categories for properties of ten or more acres in size that are inside and near the boundaries of the Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center to promote redevelopment of contaminated sites to uses that provide transition to pedestrian-oriented commercial uses.

Revise Single Family goals and policies for rezoning SF9600 and SF7200 areas

- Proposal to revise the goals and policies pertaining to rezoning SF9600 and SF7200 areas outside of any urban village to enable a greater variety of housing types and more affordable single family housing..

NEXT STEPS

A public hearing on the proposed amendments is scheduled for 6 p.m., April 12, 2006, in the Council's Chamber, 2d Floor, Seattle City Hall. The City Council Urban Planning and Development Committee will discuss and make recommendations on the recommended amendments at a subsequent meeting. The full City Council will consider the Committee's report and take action on the resolution.

Following City Council action, DPD will develop more detailed information about each of the proposed amendments and will formulate recommendations for whether to add them to the Comprehensive Plan. The Mayor will make his final recommendations to the City Council about the 2006 amendments at the beginning of August.

ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

1. Add triangle bounded by Aurora Avenue, Denny Way and Broad Street to the Uptown Urban Center.

Proposed amendment: Add triangle bounded by Aurora Avenue, Denny Way and Broad Street to the Uptown Urban Center and include “The Triangle” within the Queen Anne Neighborhood Planning Area. The area is not currently within a neighborhood planning area.

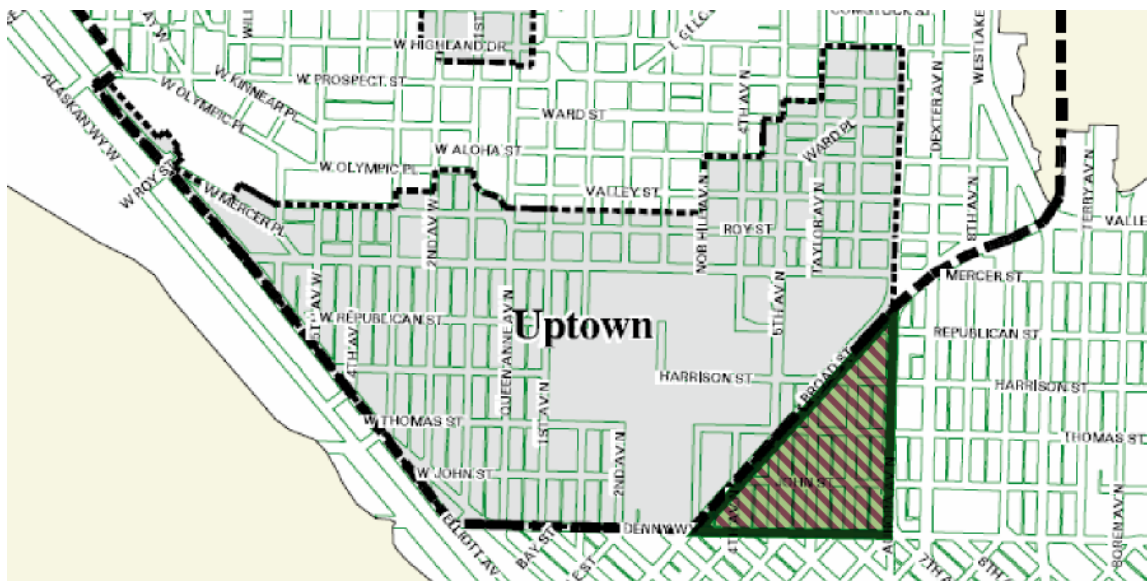
Element: Urban Village Element and Neighborhood Planning Element

Submitted by: Queen Anne Community Council Land Use Review Committee and Planning Committee.

Recommended action: Executive should continue to analyze the proposal and work with the community to develop a work plan to accompany the 2006 Comprehensive Plan ordinance.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The triangle is not currently included in any neighborhood planning area. Because this area has zoned capacity for development consistent with an urban center, it and an adjacent urban center can benefit from inclusion. Joining the Triangle to the Uptown urban center will benefit existing and future employers in both areas by accommodating additional capacity and planning for residential and commercial development.

The Aurora-Denny-Broad Triangle



2. South Lake Union Neighborhood Planning Element

Proposed amendments: Replace the goals and policies currently in the South Lake Union neighborhood plan with new ones that reflect the neighborhood’s designation as an urban center and capture the work the community and City have done to plan for the neighborhood’s new growth estimates. This could include amending the Future Land Use Map to change the Industrial area within the South Lake Union Urban Center to “Commercial/Mixed Use” in order to allow housing throughout the neighborhood.

Element: Neighborhood Planning element and Future Land Use Map

Submitted by: Executive staff

Description of the Proposed Amendment: The proposed new goals and policies reflect a current consensus within the neighborhood to foster a sustainable mixed use community. The new goals and policies will help shape Land Use Code amendments and rezones within the neighborhood, and guide City planning to help further that community vision. The proposed updated plan will address issues of Neighborhood Character, Transportation, Parks and Open Space, which are part of the current neighborhood plan. The updated plan will add new sections on Housing and Sustainable Development in order to recognize the increased importance of these subjects in South Lake Union.

New issues addressed by the draft goals and policies include:

- Housing growth, goals for a diversity of housing, and goals for a live-work neighborhood;
- Sustainable development, including policies related to sustainable infrastructure and universal design;
- Arts;
- Education;
- The importance of South Lake Union as a hub for the biotechnology industry;
- Public safety;
- Transit service; and
- Freight mobility.

The proposed goals and policies have been developed in cooperation with community groups, including the South Lake Union Friends and Neighbors (SLUFAN) and the Cascade Neighborhood Council (CNC).

Recommended action:

Continue to develop a work program to implement the goals and policies that will be submitted to Council alongside the Comprehensive Plan amendment ordinance. At least two additional community meetings are planned before the Comprehensive Plan amendments are forwarded to the City Council for review:

- a meeting to identify implementation strategies for the neighborhood plan, and
- a meeting to ratify the plan and implementation strategies

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The original South Lake Union neighborhood plan, adopted in 1998, planned for growth of 1,600 households and 4,500 jobs. In response to significant growth in the neighborhood, South Lake Union was designated an urban center in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan Update. New growth targets for the neighborhood are 8,000 households and 16,000 jobs. An updated neighborhood plan is needed to accommodate this additional growth and to reflect the increased significance of the area in regional growth management.

3. North Highline Area

Proposed amendment:

Add maps to the Urban Village Element showing the North Highline area south of current Seattle city limits as a Potential Annexation Area.

Element: Urban Village Element

Submitted by: Executive staff and advanced through Resolution 30662.

Description of the Proposed Amendment:

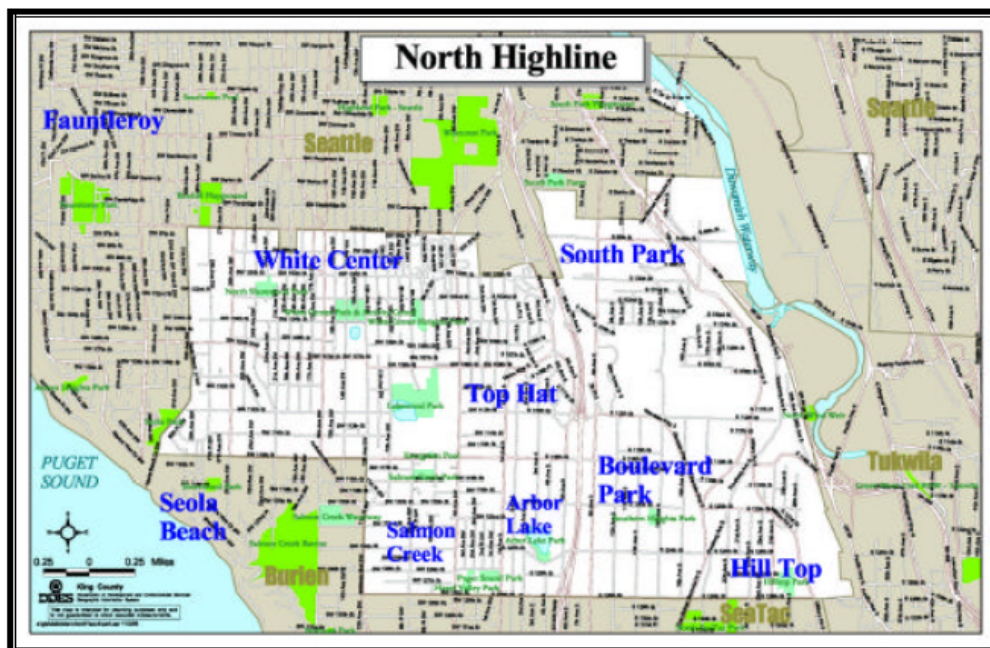
Under the Countywide Planning Policies, a city cannot annex territory unless it has first indicated its interest by formally including the territory as a Potential Annexation Area (PAA) in its comprehensive plan. However, naming an area a PAA does not necessarily mean an annexation will follow. This proposed amendment would name the unincorporated North Highline area south of the city, which includes the White Center and Boulevard Park communities, as a PAA for Seattle.

Recommended action:

Continue to analyze the proposed change to the Urban Village Element.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action:

Residents and property owners of North Highline are considering a variety of possible future governance structures for their areas. Providing services to unincorporated areas surrounded by cities becomes more difficult for King County. While the full cost of delivering services to this area remains uncertain, it is in Seattle's best interests for these communities to be stable and adequately served by local government.



4. Redesignate parcel in SE Seattle from SF to MF on the Future Land Use Map

Proposed amendment: The subject site is located in Southeast Seattle, directly west of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and east of 42nd Avenue S., near Merton Way S. The eastern portion of the site is designated “Commercial/Mixed Use Area” and the western portion is designated “Single Family Residential Area.” Applicant seeks redesignation of the western portion as “Multi-Family Residential Area.”

Element: Future Land Use Map

Submitted by: James and Cetha Hoang c/o Denise Tran, Attorney

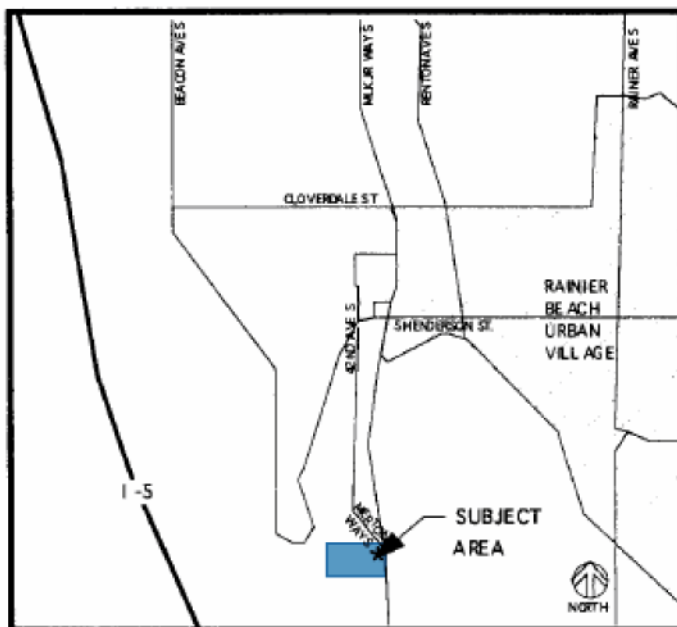
Description of the Proposed Amendment: Designating the “Single Family Residential Area” portion of the site as “Multi-Family Residential Area” will facilitate future rezoning of the site from its current SF7200 zone to a Lowrise residential zone (LDT, L1, L2, or L3).

Recommended action: Continue to analyze the proposed change to the Future Land Use Map.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action:

Further examination of the proposal is warranted due to the relatively abrupt transition within the site from C2-65 zoning to SF7200, the City-owned property to the west (Department of Parks and Recreation).

Location of Hoang Property:



5. Washington State Ferries' Colman Dock Ferry Terminal Project

Proposed amendment: Amend goals and policies in the Land Use Element and possibly the Transportation Element to facilitate development of the ferry terminal on Colman Dock, which could include commercial uses.

Element: Land Use Element

Submitted by: Washington State Department of Transportation

Description of the Proposed Amendment: The applicant seeks to amend existing Policy LU270 within the Land Use Element to enable “transit-oriented mixed-use development with a principal water-dependent regional transit use” as a condition under which a structure on the shoreline could exceed the current 35-foot height limit.

The planned Seattle Ferry Terminal Project is primarily designed to repair aging infrastructure and to increase transportation capacity. Washington State Ferries is also considering the incorporation of mixed-use development features to enhance the long-term economic viability of the ferry service. These features may include shopping, dining, lodging, recreational, and residential uses.

Additional potential conflicts with Comprehensive Plan goals and policies due to the potential height and bulk of any replacement structure could arise (e.g.s, LUG41, LUG44, LUG45, LU269). Any proposed changes to the shoreline policies within the Land Use Element may need to be accompanied by changes to the Land Use Code and to the Shorelines Master Program.

Recommended action: Executive should continue to analyze the proposal and work with applicant and the community to develop appropriate language changes.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The Seattle Ferry Terminal could be an integral component of the City's vision for the area, reflecting regional travel and the city's waterfront heritage.

6. Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement and Waterfront Concept Plan

Proposed amendment: Amendments to Land Use Policies may be necessary if the Viaduct and Seawall replacement projects require landfill or the relocation of SR99 within the shoreline area

Element: Land Use

Submitted by: Executive staff

Description of the Proposed Amendment: The City and state have an opportunity to replace the earthquake-damaged Alaskan Way Viaduct. Several components of the project may conflict with current policies: landfill in Elliott Bay to reduce the severity of the “Colman curve”; relocation of the roadway within the shoreline area; temporary relocation of utilities and the temporary staging of construction material and equipment. Amending the Comprehensive Plan is a one mechanism to facilitate the preferred design and construction activities for this project.

Recommended action: Executive should continue to analyze the possible impacts of the project relative to the Comprehensive Plan.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action:

The Alaskan Way Viaduct must be replaced due to damage from the Nisqually Earthquake. In November, there will be an advisory ballot or voters to choose among the tunnel option, a rebuilt elevated structure option, and possibly some other alternative. Regardless of the ballot’s outcome, some elements of the project may conflict with Comprehensive Plan goals and policies.

7. Goodwill Site

Proposed amendment: Amend Future Land Use Map to redesignate the area round the Goodwill site on Dearborn from “Industrial” to “Commercial/Mixed Use.”

Element: Future Land Use Map and Neighborhood Planning

Submitted by: Seattle Goodwill Industries, Inc.

Description of the Proposed Amendment: The amendment would change how the site appears on the Future Land Use Map and would facilitate a rezone sought by the property owner to construct a mixed-use urban development combining a new 120,000 sf facility for Seattle Goodwill, 600,000 sf of retail space, and up to 450 units of housing. The site is composed of several blocks or partial blocks along S. Dearborn Street, just north of Interstate 90 and west of Rainier Avenue S.

Recommended action: Executive should continue to analyze the proposal within DPD’s South Downtown planning effort to make a further recommendation in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan ordinance.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action:

The international District community has considered similar designations for this property over the past few years. This is the first time that a project proposal has been offered as a way to evaluate the possible re designation of the site. The applicant is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement that will further inform DPD’s recommendation on the proposed amendments.

Map of Study Area within Little Saigon area of Chinatown/International District



8. Amend Future Land Use Map to designate two parcels near the Magnolia Bridge “Commercial Mixed Use” for one and “Open Space” for the other.

Proposed amendment: Amend Future Land Use Map to designate two parcels near the Magnolia Bridge and Smith Cove Park as “Commercial Mixed Use” for one and “Open space” for the other.

Element: Future Land Use Map

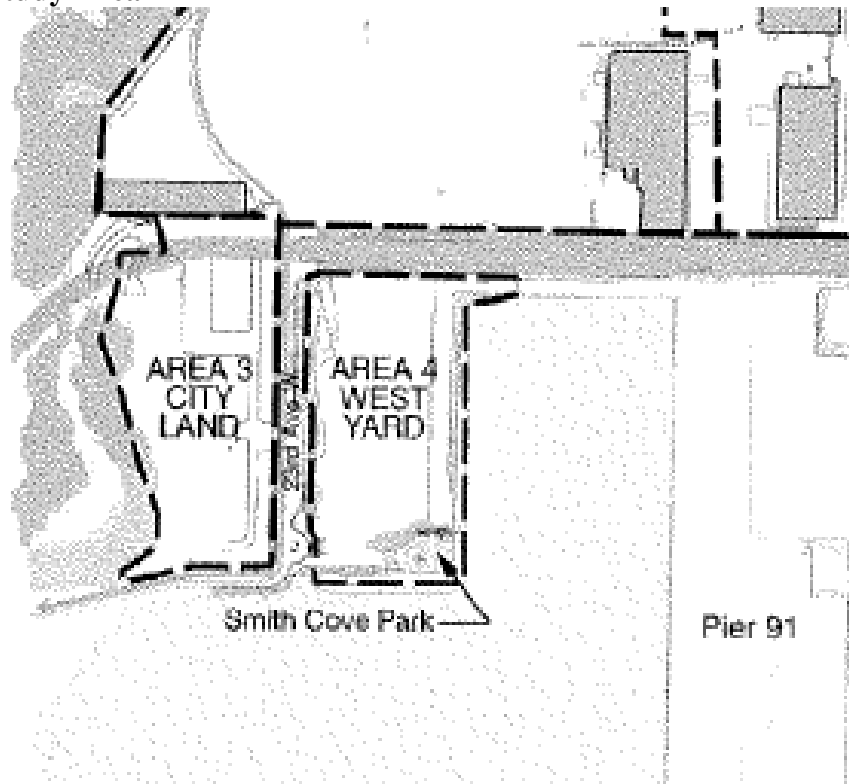
Submitted by: Port of Seattle

Description of the Proposed Amendment: Amendment would enable a potential trade of parcels between City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle.

Recommended action: Continue to analyze the proposed change to the Future Land Use Map.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The subject area is just outside the Ballard-Interbay-Northend Manufacturing & Industrial Center. The City could potentially acquire the Port’s Smith Cove Park with additional land (within area 4 shown), and the Port could potentially develop a mixed use project upland (within Area 3 shown).

Proposed Study Area



9. Exempt a portion of the Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center from limits on commercial space.

Proposed amendment: Provide an exception to policies that call for limits on the amount of commercial space allowed to be built in the Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

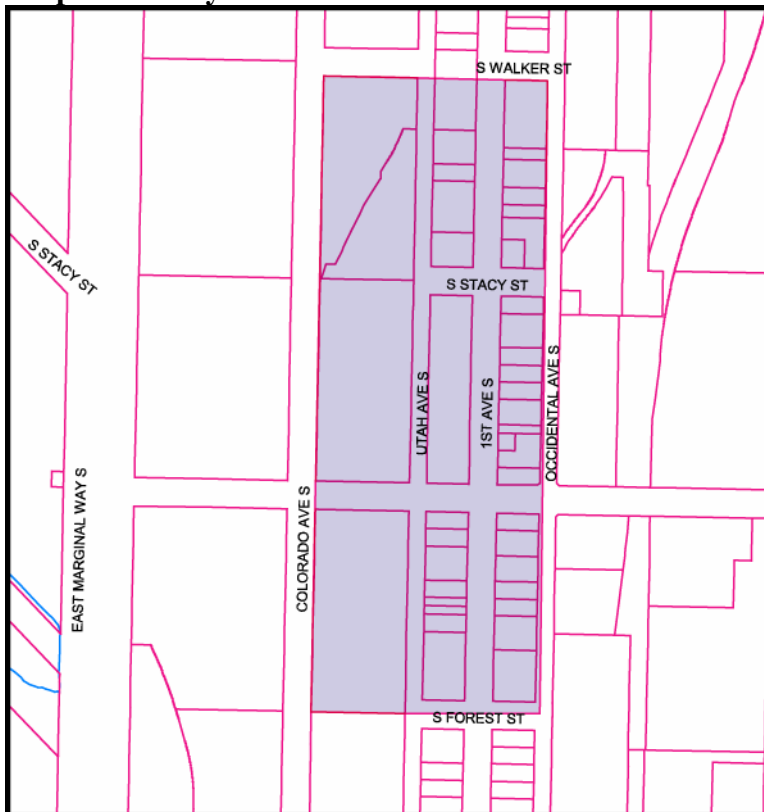
Element: Land Use

Submitted by: Nitze-Stagen

Recommended action: Continue to examine possible amendatory language that could satisfy the proponent while remaining consistent with the current overall direction of the Comprehensive Plan.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The City is interested in retaining an existing major employer that would be one of the first beneficiaries of this change in policy.

Proposed Study Area



10. Update Roosevelt Neighborhood Plan.

Proposed amendment: Various amendments to existing goals and policies in the current Roosevelt neighborhood plan.

Element: Neighborhood Planning

Submitted by: Roosevelt Neighborhood Planning Group

Description of the Proposed Amendment: The neighborhood group is considering a number of potential changes to the current neighborhood plan, in response to Sound Transit's identification of its preferred location for a light rail station. Likely amendments to the neighborhood plan could include recommendations to change zoning in the vicinity of the station in order to promote a more active pedestrian environment.

Recommended action: Continue to work with the neighborhood group into the early summer, as it develops its recommendations, and determine how those recommendations affect the current policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The selection of a site for the light rail station represents a significant changed circumstance in the neighborhood, and amendments arising from the neighborhood planning process could better position the neighborhood to accommodate appropriate development, even in advance of station construction.

11. Revise SF policies to allow rezones from SF9600 and SF7200 to SF5000 in areas outside of urban villages

Proposed amendment: Changes to one goal and two policies in the Land Use Element, including the following change to LU59:

Permit upzones of land designated single-family and meeting single-family rezone criteria, only when all one or more of the following is met:

- The land is within an urban center or urban village boundary.
- The rezone is provided for in an adopted neighborhood plan.
- The rezone is to a low-scale single-family, multi-family or mixed-use zone, compatible with single-family areas.

Element: Land Use

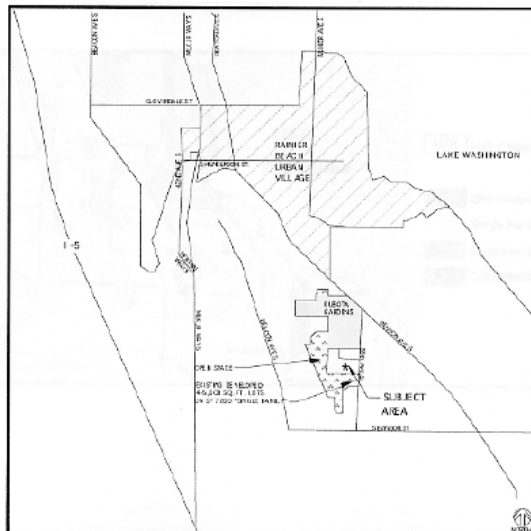
Submitted by: W.H. Skalak Trust, Chelo Cox & Donald V. Nelson

Description of the Proposed Amendment: The purpose of this proposal is to enable an upzone of particular properties owned by applicants.

Recommended action: Do not consider this proposed amendment.

Reasons for pursuing the recommended action: The amendment could have the effect of facilitating rezones of land currently zoned single-family throughout the city. This contradicts underlying premises of the Plan for concentrating more dense development in identified urban centers and urban villages, and continuing to maintain existing single-family neighborhoods.

Skalak site



Cox/Nelson site



